

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS WELLINGTON VISIT

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENTS AND PARTY, ACCOMPANIED BY AMB SELDEN, MET WITH DEFENCE MINISTER FRASER, DEFENCE SECRETARY ROBERTSON, MFA DEPUTY SECRETARY NORRISH AND SERVICE CHIEFS FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS MARCH 18, TONE OF MEETING WAS FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT AND FRASER EXPRESSED GENUINE DESIRE OF GNZ TO BE OF ASSISTANCE TO USG IN CERTAIN AREAS OF US CONCERN.

2. NEW ZEALAND AND SEATO-FRASER POINTED OUT THAT LABOUR GOVERNMENT UPON TAKING OFFICE HAD MISGIVINGS ABOUT SEATO AND EXAMINED CLOSELY QUESTION OF PULLING OUT OF THE ORGANIZATION. HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THAILAND DESIRE THAT SEATO NOT BE DISBANDED, GNZ ELECTED TO REMAIN A MEMBER AFTER INSISTING THAT ORGANIZATION BE DEMILITARIZED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. NEW ZEALAND SIDE QUESTIONED WHETHER, IN LIGHT OF RECENT THAI STATEMENTS CONCERNING CLOSER TIES WITH PRC AND HANOI, THEY STILL DESIRE SEATO COMMITMENT AND PRESENCE OF SEATO HEADQUARTERS IN BANGKOK. DEPSEC CLEMENTS AND DEPASSTSEC ZURHELLEN EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THAILAND WILL
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CONTINUE TO WANT MANILA TREATY AND SEATO PRESENCE. ON

SUBJECT OF US BASES AND FORCES THEY POINTED OUT THAT AS YET THERE NO OFFICIAL THAI REQUEST FOR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL AND IN FACT RECENT THAI STATEMENTS HAVE LINKED CONTINUED AMERICAN PRESENCE TO CURRENT SITUATION IN CAMBODIA.

3. FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENT-MINISTER FRASER RECALLED TWO DECADES OF NEW ZEALAND PRESENCE IN MALAYSIA-SINGAPORE AREAS AND STATED THAT GNZ RELATIONSHPS, PARTICULARLY WITH SINGAPORE, ARE EXTREMELY SOUND BASED ON MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT. IT IS NEW ZEALAND'S INTENTION TO KEEP FORCES IN THE AREA AS LONG AS IT IS MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS TO FPDA MEMBERS AND ESIED BY GOS AND GOM. ON THE SUBJECT OF THE MANAGEMENT OF NAVAL FACILITIES IN SINGAPORE AFTER UK WITHDRAWAL DEPSEC EXPRESSED HOPE THAT A SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT WILL BE REACHED WHICH WILL ALLOW THE UNITED STATES AND OTHERS TO RETAIN UNIMPAIED USE OF THESE IMPORTANT FACILITES. FRASER SAID THAT HE, SECRETARY ROBERTSON AND LT.GEN. WEBB INTEND TO DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT DURING APRIL VISIT TO SINGAPORE. HE STATED IT IS GNZ DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL IN REACHING A SOLUTION WHICH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED WILL FIND ACCEPTABLE.

4. NPW VISITS-DEPSEC, AFTER BRIEF REVIEW OF HISOTORY OF NPW VISITS TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, STATED THAT FOLLOWING RECENT US LEGISLATION ON LIABILITY, MAJOR ROAD BLOCKS TO RESUMPTION SUCH VISITS APPEAR TO BE OUT OF THE WAY. THUS WE HOPE NPW VISITS CAN BE RESUMED IN NEAR FUTURE. FRASER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SITUATION AS OUTLINED IN AIDE MEMOIRE RECENTLY PRESENTED TO PRIME MINISTER BY AMBASSADOR SELDEN HAS CHANGED THE SITUATION AND THAT THE SUBJECT IS BEING GIVEN CAREFUL ATTENTION. HE STATED THAT WHILE NPW VISITS NOT ON FORMAL AGENDA FOR NEXT WEEK'S MEETING BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER ROLWING AND PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM THE SUBJECT WILL BE DISCUSSED AND THAT POSSIBILITY OF NPW VISITS TO NEW ZEALAND WOULD BE ENHNACED IF AUSTRALIA AGREED TO SIMULTANEOUS VISITS. DEPSEC OUTLINED MARCH 14 DISCUSSIONS THIS SUBJECT WITH AUSTRALIANS AND SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT A SPECIFIC NPW VISIT, PERHAPS TO A WEST COAST AUSTRALIAN PORT, CAN BE ARRANGED DURING NEXT FEW MONTHS.

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5. SOUTH PACIFIC NUCLEAR FREE ZONE-DURING PRELIMINARY COMMENTS, DEPSEC CLEMENTS MADE A FORCEFUL STATEMENT CONCERNING USG INABILITY TO SUPPORT CONCEPT OF SPNFZ. GNZ SIDE TOOK NOTE OF THIS STATEMENT WITHOUT FURTHER COMMENT OR DISCUSSION.

6. FUTURE OF TTPI-DEPSEC AND MEBERS OF US SIDE

DESCRIBED IN DETAIL PREPARATIONS FOR THE PLEBISCITE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE FOR NEW ZEALAND SUPPORT (A) IN URGING THAT UNITED NATIONS OBSERVERS BE PRESENT IN THE ISLANDS AT THE TIME OF THE PLEBISCITE TO ASSURE THAT IT IS PROPERLY CARRIED OUT AND IS A TRUE REFLECTION OF THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANAS AND (B) WHEN THE SUBJECT ARISES IN THE UN FOLLOWING THE PLEBISCITE. THE NEW ZEALAND SIDE WAS APPRECIATIVE OF THE EXPLANATION GIVEN AND NORRISH INDICATED THAT IF THE PLEBISCITE WAS CARRIED OUT AS DESCRIBED GNZ SUPPORT WOULD MOST LIKELY BE FORTHCOMING AT UN.

7. JAPAN-MINISTER FRASER, MORE ON A PERSONAL BASIS THAN AS A MEMBER OF GOVERNMENT, INDICATED SOME HISTORICAL UNEASINESS ABOUT JAPAN AND WONDERED IF US SIDE ENVISAGED RESURGENT JAPANESE MILITARISM AS A REACTION TO RAW MATERIAL SHORTAGES AND UNCERTAINTY OVER PETROLEUM COSTS AND SUPPLY. DEPSEC CLEMENTS AND DEPASSEC ZURHELLEN SAW POSSIBILITY OF SOME INCREASE IN JAPANESE DEFENSE SPENDING FROM PRESENT LOW OF ONE PERCENT OF GNP BUT FELT THAT RATHER THAN RESURGENT MILITARISM JAPAN WOULD TEND TO POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN ECONOMIC VIABILITY.

8. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION, SECRETARY CLEMENTS COMMENTED ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN INDOCHINA, EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE LONG HISTORY OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE ARMED FORCES OF NEW ZEALAND AND THE UNITED STATES AND EXPRESSED THE DESIRE THAT SUCH RELATIONSHIP CONTINUE THROUGH CONSULTATIONS, TROOL EXCHANGES, TRAINING PROGRAMS, AND FREQUENT CONSULTATIONS AT ALL LEVELS.

9. DEPSEC MEETING WTIH PRIME MINISTER ROWLING AND MFA SECRETARY CORNER TO BE SUBJECT SEPTTEL.

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